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North Dakota Homeland Security Anti-Terrorism Summary



The North Dakota Open Source Anti-Terrorism Summary is a product of the North Dakota State and Local Intelligence Center (NDSLIC). It provides open source news articles and information on terrorism, crime, and potential destructive or damaging acts of nature or unintentional acts. Articles are placed in the Anti-Terrorism Summary to provide situational awareness for local law enforcement, first responders, government officials, and private/public infrastructure owners.

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NORTH DAKOTA

EPA: No approval needed to move more water from Devils Lake. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued a formal ruling that North Dakota does not need federal approval to move additional water from Devils Lake to the Sheyenne River. The ruling allows the state to increase its controlled releases through the existing state outlet and through another planned outlet on the eastern end of the lake, according to a U.S. Senator from North Dakota. The EPA decision is based on a 2008 rule that allows for the transfer of water within the state from one water body to another without a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. Based on the state's current plan submitted to EPA, the agency has said it has no jurisdiction or authority to enforce water quality standards set by the state under the Clean Water Act. Devils Lake has risen by nearly 30 feet and quadrupled in size since 1993, reaching a record 1,452.1 feet in elevation this past summer. That is just 6 feet from the elevation where geologists said it would begin to flow uncontrollably to the Sheyenne River Valley. Source: <http://www.grandforksherald.com/event/article/id/186976/>

Gas pipeline explodes. Tires and metal scrap are all that remains after a trench digging machine ruptured a gas pipeline in Billings County, North Dakota December 10, causing an explosion. The accident occurred northeast of Belfield, and no one was injured. A man was heating a pipe his crew was working on, which was above the ground, when they struck the buried pipe. "All of a sudden I was getting pelted with rocks and stuff, and I looked to my right and there was just this great big fireball and it was coming towards me," said a worker. "Two guys took off running, and I dropped the propane torch that I had and took off running." Frontier Services, the company building the new pipe, said the trencher along with two trucks were destroyed in the accident. One worker was in one of those trucks and barely escaped with his life. Underground lines are generally marked when digging work like this is taking place. A spokesperson for Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline Company, which operates the gas line, said records indicate it was marked, while officials at Frontier said there were no flags or paint marking a line. Source: http://www.kfyrvtv.com/News_Stories.asp?news=45148

Coal cars go off the rails. Twenty-one cars in a 123-car Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway (BNSF) coal train derailed December 12 on the west side of the railroad yard in Jamestown, North Dakota. The Stutsman County emergency manager said the derailment happened around 7 a.m. Cars at the front of the fully loaded train spilled their coal over the railroad yard tracks. The yard is BNSF property — as is the gravel road bordering it. The Jamestown Police Department assisted with traffic control closing parts of 17th Avenue Southwest and other affected roadways. The Stutsman County's Sheriff's Department also responded. The railroad crossing at the west end of the yard was cleared at 4:30 p.m. December 12, according to the BNSF director of public affairs. She said cleanup will be slow due to the weather and the tonnage involved. The derailed cars will most likely be unsalvageable, she added, and will be scrapped. The cause of the derailment is under investigation. Once the cleanup is completed, the track will be inspected and repaired. Source: <http://www.jamestownsun.com/event/article/id/125232/>

REGIONAL

(Minnesota) Meat processor gets pollution penalty. Noah's Ark Processors, a meat-processing plant in western Minnesota, has been given a \$20,000 civil penalty for discharges of blood- and manure-contaminated water. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency said December 15 it has reached an agreement with the plant. The agreement resolves alleged violations of water quality laws and rules at the company's meat processing plant and animal hide storage building in Dawson. The agency said an inspection last August found blood-contaminated water and untreated manure discharging to the ground. The company has stopped the discharges and worked to recover contamination as well as submitted plans to prevent future discharges. Source:

<http://www.foodmanufacturing.com/scripts/ShowPR~RID~18613.asp>

(Minnesota) Natural gas leak forces multi-block evacuation in Mpls. First responders evacuated at least 3 square blocks of Minneapolis, Minnesota, December 15 after the discovery of a significant natural gas leak. A Centerpoint Energy spokesperson said reports of the leak triggered an emergency response plan shortly after 10 a.m.. Minneapolis firefighters and police officers went door to door in the area of 13th Avenue South and Franklin, telling people to leave their homes and businesses. All evacuees were asked to leave on foot, and not to flip light switches or use cell phones to avoid igniting the natural gas. Shortly before noon, crews were able to locate and isolate the source of the leak, which a spokeswoman said was coming from an exterior main gas line. An incident commander on the scene said the concern was that a large flow of gas was moving through the sewers, which is a situation that can lead to an explosion. Crews dug a major trench to vent the natural gas into the air. Emergency responders who were monitoring air quality gave the all clear around 12:30 p.m., and began allowing residents and business people back into the area. Source:

http://www.kare11.com/news/news_article.aspx?storyid=893538&catid=391

(Minnesota) Metrodome roof rips, collapses. For the fourth time in the Metrodome's 28-year history, snow and high winds ripped and deflated its roof December 12, leaving a big hole in the Minneapolis, Minnesota, skyline. The roof of the stadium used for professional football games and college baseball games gave way at 5 a.m. when three fabric panels tore under the weight of more than 24 inches of snow in places, creating a mess that ultimately could cost the Minnesota Vikings National Football League team millions in lost revenue. No one was injured. Officials from Birdair Structures Inc., the Amherst, New York, rooftop fabricator and installer, will arrive in Minneapolis to assess damage and start repair work December 13, the Dome facilities and engineering director for the Metropolitan Sports Facilities Commission said. No one could estimate yet how long repairs might take. Source:

<http://www.startribune.com/111748539.html?elr=KArksLckD8EQDUoaEyqyP4O:DW3ckUiD3aPc: Yyc :aU1yDEmP:QMDCinchO7DU>

(Montana) Man sentenced for setting fires in national forest. A 23-year-old Dillon, Montana, man who set fires in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest has been sentenced to 1 year probation and must pay \$500 in restitution. The suspect, who earlier pleaded guilty to damaging government property, was sentenced December 14 in Missoula by a U.S. Magistrate judge. Prosecutors said the man lit beetle-killed trees on fire in the Birch Creek area October 18, 2009, along with a 26-year-old man from Dillon who was a temporary firefighter for the U.S. Forest Service at the time. The fire burned about one-tenth of an acre, and the 26-year-old was involved in the suppression effort.

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Another defendant pleaded guilty to the same charge and is scheduled to be sentenced March 2. He was with the two suspects when they tried to start fires on Black Mountain October 17, 2009. Source: <http://www.greatfalls Tribune.com/article/20101214/NEWS01/101214024/Man+sentenced+for+setting+fires+in+national+forest>

(Montana, Washington) Montana passenger rail service still at standstill. Amtrak service in Whitefish, Montana was nearly at a standstill December 15, due to severe flooding in the Pacific Northwest. Severe winter weather closed Amtrak lines both east and westbound going through Chicago, Minneapolis, Whitefish, Spokane, Portland, and Seattle earlier in the week. Wet, heavy snow in Western Washington state over the weekend of December 11 and 12 sparked the delays for freight trains as well as some Amtrak passengers trains. It is not clear when lines will reopen, but Amtrak is providing alternative travel arrangements. Source: <http://www.kaj18.com/news/montana-passenger-rail-service-still-at-standstill/>

NATIONAL

Aging oil rigs, pipelines expose Gulf to accidents. The West Cameron 45-A platform is, according to government records, the oldest functioning platform in federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico. One of more than 100 structures built in the 1940s and 1950s still in operation, the platform has survived seven Category 2 hurricanes and a major fire. Much of that infrastructure is decades old. Roughly half of the Gulf's more than 3,000 production platforms are 20 years old or more, and a third date back to the 1970s or earlier, long before the development of modern construction standards. More than half have been operating longer than their designers intended, according to federal regulators. Older structures are more prone to accidents, especially fires, and more dangerous for workers. According to a Wall Street Journal analysis of federal accident records, platforms 20 years old or more accounted for more than 60 percent of fires and nearly 60 percent of serious injuries aboard platforms in 2009. Platforms are subjected to extreme ocean currents, corrosive salt water, and frequent hurricanes. Unlike drilling rigs, which are mobile, platforms cannot be brought to shore for repairs. Many are so old or have changed hands so many times, that maintenance records are missing or unreliable. Experts said maintenance work has often gotten short shrift in an industry focused on new discoveries rather than old, declining fields; generally agreeing that restoring all the old or outdated U.S. energy infrastructure onshore and off is a multi-trillion-dollar problem. Source: http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704584804575644463302701660.html?mod=googlenews_wsj

Freeze extends beyond Midwest. A blast of Arctic air — which brought blizzard conditions to the Midwest over the weekend, collapsed the roof of the Metrodome in Minneapolis and forced hundreds of flight cancellations — was sweeping down the Eastern seaboard December 13. The blast is forecast to drop temperatures below freezing as far south as Florida, where the governor declared a state of emergency for citrus growers, and cause flight delays in the Northeast after wreaking havoc on travel in the upper Midwest. “The really big story is the winter weather in the Midwest,” said a spokesman for Delta Air Lines. “We have restarted operations in Minneapolis. As the storm goes through, we are restarting operations at other airports. We’ll reaccommodate passengers as quickly as we can.” Nearly 1,500 flights were canceled at Chicago’s O’Hare and Midway airports, said a spokeswoman for the Chicago Department of Aviation. There were delays at several airports in the East, including Atlanta, Boston, and Newark. High winds and mounds of snow closed roads in several

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states. At least four weather-related deaths were reported Sunday — two in Wisconsin and one each in Minnesota and Indiana. Source: http://www.usatoday.com/weather/forecast/2010-12-13-winterweather13_ST_N.htm

U.S. issues new guidance for offshore drilling. The Presidential administration December 13 gave new details about the rules for deep-water drilling, responding to oil companies' complaints that mandates imposed since the Gulf of Mexico oil spill are so unclear they are delaying projects. Although the administration lifted its deep-water drilling moratorium in October, the government has yet to approve any proposed projects that would have been blocked by the ban. All projects must first meet new environmental and safety standards, but industry leaders said they have had trouble understanding some of the rules. The 18-page guidance document issued December 13 is meant to "ensure that the oil and gas industry has clear direction on what is expected," said the director of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement. It contains no new rules for deep-water drilling — just more information about how companies can comply with previously established mandates for testing safety equipment, estimating the potential size of oil spills and other issues. The ocean energy bureau also addressed the thorny issue of how to calculate the "worst-case discharge" of oil from offshore wells — an estimate that dictates a number of mandates for operators, including the amount of money they would have available in case of a spill, and their capability to respond to one. However, before imposing substantive new mandates, federal agencies generally must go through a formal rule-making process that requires they first be proposed and subjected to a public comment period. Source: <http://www.chron.com/dispatch/story.mpl/business/energy/7337903.html>

(California) Crews will haul away Escondido "Bomb Factory" house rubble on Monday. Crews December 13 were slated to start removing the rubble of an Escondido, California, home destroyed in a controlled fire to safely dispose of a large cache of bomb-making materials found inside. The San Diego County Sheriff's Bomb Arson unit determined the December 9 incineration of the house destroyed all of the explosives and hazardous materials inside, so the rubble will be dumped in local landfills, said a San Diego County spokesman. Crews from the state, county, and private companies will work together to clean up the site, and California's Department of Toxic Substances Control and the San Diego County Department of Environmental Health will oversee the removal process. Waste from the fire will be kept wet to constrain dust to the burn site, and fiber rolls will be used to ensure runoff from the site does not go into storm drains. The cleanup process will continue until the middle of the week of December 13. Officials decided to burn the so-called "Bomb Factory" home to the ground to dispose of the hazardous materials at the site after bomb crews said removing the explosive materials would be too dangerous. The home owner who rented the house with his wife for about 4 years, pleaded not guilty December 6 to eight federal criminal counts and was ordered held without bail. Source: <http://www.swrnn.com/southwest-riverside/2010-12-11/local-county-news/crews-will-haul-away-escondido-bomb-factory-house-rubble-on-monday>

INTERNATIONAL

Nothing significant to Report

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BANKING AND FINANCE INDUSTRY

(Ohio) State authorities investigate detonation of explosive device. The Ohio fire marshal, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Huber Heights fire and police departments and the Dayton Bomb Squad continue to investigate after an incident at the Fifth-Third Bank on Taylorsville Road December 16. Investigators said a homemade explosive device exploded and ignited the base of an ATM between midnight and 12:15 a.m. The device caused superficial damage to the ATM and no one was injured. Authorities said they are trying to determine who made and detonated the device. Pieces of the exploded device are being analyzed and it could be 7 to 10 days before results are available. Source: <http://www.whiotv.com/news/26171988/detail.html>

Bank of America claims ex-employees took databases. Bank of America has claimed in a lawsuit that four ex-employees copied confidential databases of its trade secrets, and executed a “coordinated” attack on its wealth management unit using the data. The password-protected database was taken by the employees, it said, as they left the company. The ex-employees “brazenly” announced they were taking the data, including client names, addresses, e-mails, and phone numbers, Bank of America said in papers filed the week of December 6 at the New York Supreme Court. The four accused now work at Dynasty Financial Partners, a wealth management and financial technology firm in New York. They left resignation letters stating they were allowed to take the information under a protocol agreed on by some banks, according to Bank of America. But the bank said it had not signed up for the protocol. Dynasty is also one of the defendants in the case. The employees and Dynasty deny the accusations. Bank of America said in its lawsuit that the databases provide “complete, comprehensive information” on clients and potential clients’ financial profile and investment preferences. The judge in the case has temporarily barred Dynasty and the four individuals from using or sharing the database to solicit new clients, according to a Bloomberg report. But it did not bar the individuals from advising their existing clients. Source: <http://www.networkworld.com/news/2010/121510-bank-of-america-claims-ex-employees.html?hpg1=bn>

(Michigan; Pennsylvania) Two banks closed Dec. 10. Federal and state regulators closed two banks December 10, raising the total number of failed institutions to 173 so far in 2010. Paramount Bank, Farmington Hills, Michigan, was closed by the Michigan Office of Financial and Insurance Regulation, which appointed the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) as receiver. FDIC entered into a purchase and assumption agreement with Level One Bank, Farmington Hills, to assume all Paramount deposits. The four branches of Paramount reopened December 13 as branches of Level One. As of September 30, Paramount had about \$252.7 million in assets and \$213.6 million in deposits. FDIC and Level One entered into a loss-share transaction on \$233.1 million of Paramount’s assets. Level One will share in the losses on the asset pools covered under the loss-share agreement. FDIC estimated the cost to the Deposit Insurance Fund (DIF) will be \$90.2 million. Earthstar Bank, Southampton, Pennsylvania was closed by the state’s secretary of banking, and the FDIC was appointed as receiver. FDIC entered into a purchase and assumption agreement with Polonia Bank, Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania, to assume all of Earthstar’s deposits, except for certain out-of-state certificates of deposit. As of September 30, Earthstar had about \$112.6 million in assets and \$104.5 million in deposits. Polonia also agreed to purchase approximately \$77.1 million of the failed bank’s assets. The FDIC will retain most of the assets for later disposition. Source:

http://www.bankinfosecurity.com/articles.php?art_id=3166

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Operation Payback has new target: Corporate fax machines. The activists behind Operation Payback have come up with a new way to annoy corporations that have severed their ties with WikiLeaks: bombard them with faxes. In online chats, group members have posted the fax numbers for about a half-dozen corporations and are calling volunteers to fill up the fax machines, using free online fax services such as MyFax.com and FaxZero.com. They are recommending that people use anonymizing software such as the Tor Project to access these sites, so that they cannot be traced by authorities. Anonymous has posted a list of numbers that it says are no longer responsive. One number, the Visa fax number listed by Yahoo Finance, was disconnected Monday afternoon. A Visa spokesman did not immediately have a comment on the situation, but Visa seems to be aware of the problem. A call center operator asked for Visa's fax number on Monday said simply: "I cannot provide that information." Source:

[http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9201082/Operation Payback has new target Corporate fax machines](http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9201082/Operation_Payback_has_new_target_Corporate_fax_machines)

One in four households victim of white collar crime: report. White collar crime now affects more Americans than all other forms of crime combined, according to a new report published by the the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C). Conducted by the NW3C and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the 2010 National Public Survey on White Collar Crime found that nearly one in four American households were victims of white collar crime during the past 12 months. The survey of 2,503 adults from June to August 2010 asked respondents about personal and household experiences involving mortgage fraud, credit card fraud, identity theft, unnecessary home or auto repairs, price misrepresentation, and losses due to dishonest stockbrokers, fraudulent business ventures, and Internet scams. The NW3C is a non-profit membership group that studies white collar crime and works with law enforcement and companies. The group also partners with the FBI on the Internet Crime Complaint Center. Source: <http://www.walletpop.com/2010/12/13/one-in-4-households-victim-of-white-collar-crime-report/>

(Indiana) Device victimized Chase ATM customers. Chase Bank is working with the FBI to track fraud artists who victimized about 300 customers at an undisclosed ATM in Indianapolis, Indiana in November, a company spokeswoman said the week of December 6. Chase's fraud department found an object known as a skimming device had been placed on one of the machines a few hours one night, she said. About 300 customers of Chase had their accounts compromised. The spokeswoman said all received new debit cards and, if needed, reimbursements. Source:

<http://www.indystar.com/article/20101210/LOCAL/12100355/Device-victimized-Chase-ATM-customers?odyssey=tab|mostpopular|text|LOCAL>

CHEMICAL AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SECTOR

Nothing significant to Report

COMMERCIAL FACILITIES

(Nevada) Tropicana Avenue reopens after suspicious item prompts evacuation. Metro Police evacuated apartments and shut down a portion of Tropicana Avenue in Las Vegas, Nevada, as they investigated a suspicious item December 15. A Metro Police spokesman said police received a call shortly after 1 p.m. when an employee at an apartment complex in the 4800 block of Tropicana

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Avenue discovered a suspicious item. Police responded and called the armor detail to investigate the item, he said. As a precaution, police shut down both directions of traffic on Tropicana Avenue from Nellis Boulevard to Mountain Vista Street. Traffic has since reopened, but other details about the item were not available. Source: <http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2010/dec/15/suspicious-item-prompts-apartment-evacuation-close/>

(Ohio) Group: Ohio mosque received anti-Muslim e-mail. A Muslim civil liberties group said a threatening e-mail was sent to a Cincinnati, Ohio mosque that was bombed 5 years ago. The local chapter of the Washington-based Council on American-Islamic Relations quoted the December 11 e-mail as saying Muslims are not wanted in Cincinnati and warning: "Beware. We may just declare jihad (holy war) on you." An FBI spokesman said December 14 the FBI is investigating. He declined to discuss details of the threat or the e-mail's origin. No one was injured in two explosions from pipe bombs December 20, 2005, at the Clifton mosque near the University of Cincinnati campus. There were no injuries and only minor damage, and no arrests have been made in the case. A threat against the mosque was also reported in 2006. Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/14/AR2010121405220.html>

(California) Mother killed, 6 hurt in gunbattle at Calif. mall. A mother loading her 2-year-old son into an SUV was killed December 14 and six others were wounded in a gunbattle at a strip mall in Sacramento, California, authorities said. Two men were inside Fly Cuts & Styles barber shop just before 1 p.m. when two other men came in and started shooting, a Sacramento County Sheriff's Department sergeant said. The men in the barber shop were armed and returned fire, he said. The gunbattle apparently moved into the parking lot, and the gunfire continued as some of the suspects got away. A bullet struck the 30-year-old woman in the chest just after she put her son into the child seat of her Chevy Tahoe, he said. The woman was pronounced dead at the scene; the child was unhurt and has been placed under child protective services. Five of the six men injured in the gunbattle were taken to local hospitals, including an unidentified man with life-threatening injuries who was shot in the chest. Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/us_strip_mall_shooting

(Alabama) Authorities report two devices exploded overnight. Local, state, and federal authorities are investigating two December 9 explosions — one in the city of Cullman, Alabama, business district and another in a rural area of the county. No one was reported injured in the blasts, which the police chief said was heard by an officer at Cullman Shopping Center and a dispatcher at the police station, and by residents in the city and county. A passing motorist also reported seeing smoke coming from one of the car wash ports at Arnold Street Car Wash. The second explosion was in an open area west of Cullman along the County Road 1200 area between 11 p.m. and midnight. Evidence was recovered at both scenes, the assistant chief of the Cullman Police Department said. Cullman investigators were on the scene December 10 at the car wash collecting evidence from one of the ports and across the parking lot. "We have found evidence, but we're not in a position to say what type of device it was. We have asked ATF (Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms) and the ABI (Alabama Bureau of Investigation) for assistance," a sergeant said. The explosive device was apparently planted on one of the hanging sprayers in a port of the car wash. A large blackened area was visible on the wall. The second device was apparently exploded in an open field. Source:

<http://www.cullmantimes.com/local/x1964518249/Authorities-report-two-devices-exploded-overnight>

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(California) Montclair Target shoppers evacuated as suspicious luggage probed. Two unattended suitcases were found outside of a department store in Montclair, California December 12, leading to the evacuation of about 500 shoppers for more than 3 hours. Target security personnel found the suitcases on the north exterior of the store on Central Avenue at 12:42 p.m. Fire and police officials responded and thought the luggage was suspicious and notified the bomb squad. Shoppers and employees were evacuated and the store was shut down while the Ontario Fire Department's Bomb Squad checked out the bags. The suitcases were scanned with X-ray equipment and were found to be empty. No further investigation is planned, police said. During the investigation, the north side of the Target parking lot was cordoned off as were portions of the lots at Best Buy, Carl's Jr., and Hometown Buffet. Source: http://www.contracostatimes.com/california/ci_16842580?ncllick_check=1

COMMUNICATIONS SECTOR

Warrant needed to get your e-mail, appeals court says. The government must obtain a court warrant to require internet service providers to turn over stored e-mail to the authorities, a federal appeals court ruled December 14. The decision by the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was the first time an appellate court said Americans had that Fourth Amendment protection. "The government may not compel a commercial ISP to turn over the contents of a subscriber's e-mails without first obtaining a warrant based on probable cause," the appeals court ruled. The decision — one stop short of the Supreme Court — covers Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee. The legal brouhaha centered on the founder of an Ohio herbal-supplement company that marketed male-enhancement tablets. As part of a fraud investigation, the government obtained thousands of his e-mails from his ISP without a warrant. He appealed his 25-year conviction on those and other grounds, and the circuit court tossed his sentence on issues unrelated to the court's language concerning e-mail privacy. At issue in the e-mail flap was a 1986 law that allows the government to obtain a suspect's e-mail from an ISP or Webmail provider without a probable-cause warrant, once it has been stored for 180 days or more. The appeals court said December 14 this part of the Stored Communications Act is unconstitutional. Source: <http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2010/12/fourth-amendment-email/>

HDTVs are vulnerable to cyber and hacking attacks. Hackers can potentially use Internet-connected HDTVs to infiltrate malware into home networks, said the latest report by a maker of security software for smartphones, VoIP devices, and TVs. Mocana conducted the tests on a range of inter-connected TVs, during which a security flaw was discovered in the kit of an unspecified manufacturer. The firm does not elaborate on the firm involved or the security weakness, at least until a fix is released. In its press release, Mocana said the security bug is a way to hack into consumers' home network and potentially intercept and redirect internet traffic to and from the HDTV to mount phishing scams, gain access to backend services from third-party organizations (such as video streaming), or monitor and report on consumers' private internet usage habits. Mocana's researchers managed to deploy hacking techniques familiar to the world of PC skullduggery (such as "rogue DNS", "rogue DHCP server", or TCP session hijacking techniques) to inject JavaScript onto a vulnerable device "allowing attackers script integrity before running code". Source: http://www.ecommerce-journal.com/news/30660_hdtvs-are-vulnerable-cyber-and-hacking-attacks

U.S. ranks 25th in the world for Internet connection speed. The United States ranks 25th in the world in average Internet connection speeds, and nearly half of all U.S. residents' Internet connections fall below the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) minimum definition of

broadband, at 4 megabits per second download, according to a new report. The median download speed in the U.S. in 2010 is 3 mbps, a slight increase from 2009, said the report, released December 15 by the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and Speedmatters.org. South Korea's average download speed is 34.1 mbps, Sweden's is 22.2 mbps, Romania's is 20.3 mbps, and Japan's is 18 mbps, the report said. About 1 percent of U.S. Internet connections meet the FCC national broadband plan's goal of 50 mbps for download speeds by 2015, the report indicated. Economic growth in the U.S. depends on high-speed broadband, it added. "It determines whether we will have the 21st century networks we need to create the jobs of the future, develop our economy, and support innovations in telemedicine, education, public safety, energy conservation, and provision of public services to improve our lives and communities," the report said. "Most U.S. Internet connections are not fast enough in both directions to permit interactive home-based medical monitoring, multi-media distance learning, or to send and receive data to run a home-based business." Source:

[http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9201306/U.S. ranks 25th in the world for Internet connection speed](http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9201306/U.S._ranks_25th_in_the_world_for_Internet_connection_speed)

Malware, DoS attacks a threat to mobile phones, warns EU agency. Smartphones could soon be used to launch distributed attacks, much like traditional PCs are now used as parts of larger botnet networks, according to a new report from the European Network and Information Security Agency (ENISA). In research that details the many risks of smartphones, the findings claim that while the devices are not currently being targeted for such attacks, this may change as mobile devices are becoming more popular, more connected and the complexity and the number of vulnerabilities in these platforms is increasing. Smartphone botnets could be used for familiar crimes such as spam, click fraud, and DDoS, the report claims. Since smartphones interface with cellular networks, they could also be used for new distributed attack scenarios; such as SMS spam and DDoS on telephony networks. Such attacks could be used to support wider attacks on, for example, other infrastructure. "Mobile phone coverage is becoming increasingly vital, especially in the event of an emergency, so smartphones open up new possibilities for DDoS attacks with potentially serious impacts," according to the findings. In an example, the report cites an example of a 2001 virus that impacted DoCoMo, a Japanese mobile operator. The "i-mode virus" had access to call interfaces, which were available to malicious e-mails at the time and caused the user's device to dial emergency numbers. Source:

<http://news.techworld.com/security/3253629/>

CRITICAL MANUFACTURING

Fagor America Inc. recalls refrigerators due to fire hazard. Fagor America Inc. announced a recall of about 1,400 refrigerators December 16. The control board can overheat, posing a fire hazard to consumers. Fagor has received 19 reports of incidents, including 2 reports of fires resulting in damage to the refrigerator and surrounding property. No injuries have been reported. The recall involves 24-inch wide refrigerators sold in stainless steel and black. "Fagor" is printed on the refrigerator's front door. Model and serial numbers are located inside the refrigerator door, on the left hand side near the food storage drawers. The models and serial numbers of the refrigerators are as follows: Fagor T/3FCA-68NFX, serial numbers starting with 0609xxxxx through 0727xxxxx; 3FCA-68NFX, serial numbers starting with 0746 through 1017; and FCA-86ART, serial numbers starting with 0839 through 0915. They were sold at Specialty Home Appliance Stores nationwide between July 2006 and May 2010 for between \$2,000 and \$2,500. They were manufactured in Spain. Source:

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/prhtml11/11072.html>

Wal-Mart recalls Flow Pro, Airtech, Aloha Breeze, Comfort Essentials Electric heaters. Wal-Mart announced a recall December 16 of 2.2 million 1,500 watt electric heaters sold under the Flow Pro, Airtech, Aloha Breeze, and Comfort Essentials brand names. The heaters can malfunction resulting in overheating, smoking, burning, melting, and fire. Wal-Mart has received 21 reports of incidents, which included 11 reports of property damage beyond the heater. Injuries were reported in four incidents, three of which required medical attention for minor burns and smoke inhalation. The remaining incidents included smoke irritation, sparking, or property damage beyond the heater. The heaters are grey with a metal handle on the top with vents and grey control knobs on the front. The model number is 1013 and can be found on a label on the lower left corner of the back panel of the heater. Wal-Mart stores sold the heaters nationwide from December 2001 through October 2009 for about \$18. They were made in China. Source: <http://www.consumeraffairs.com/recalls04/2010/wal-mart-recalls-flow-pro-airtech-aloha-breeze-comfort-essentials-electric-heaters.html>

GM recalling 100,000 crossovers to fix seat belts. General Motors Co. is recalling about 100,000 crossover vehicles to fix seat belts that could fail in a crash. GM said in a December 17 posting with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that the recall involves 2011 model year versions of the Cadillac SRX, Chevrolet Equinox, and GMC Terrain. The automaker said the seat belt buckle anchor for the driver and front passenger seats could break apart in a crash. A GM spokesman said there have been no crashes or injuries reported. GM said it discovered the problem during testing in September 2010. Dealers will modify the seat belt buckles free of charge. The recall is expected to begin January 2011. Source: http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/us_gm_recall;_ylt=AukemjVzHLX3BX_DeRs6SF6s0NUE;_ylu=X3oDMTNnNWYwbjlqBGFzc2V0A2FwLzlwMTAxMjE3L3VzX2dtX3JlY2FsbARjY29kZQNTb3N0cG9wdWxhcGRjcG9zAzcEcG9zAzQEChQDaG9tZV9jb2t1BHNIYwN5bl9WFkbGluZV9saXN0BHNSawNnbXJlY2FsbGluZzE-

(New York; Kentucky) CDX Group recalls desk and table lamps. CDX Group announced a recall of about 1,600 desk and table lamps December 15. Substandard electrical wiring, connections, and plugs in these lamps pose a fire and shock risk to consumers. This recall involves eight different desk and table lamps including item numbers 207, 303, 9774, 1108, 1109, 049-1, 054-8, and 2001-271B. The item numbers are printed on the lamps' packaging. The lamps were sold by CDX Group's showroom, New Chens Discount, Concordia Trading Inc. and Grace Mini Market in Brooklyn, New York, and Dollar King in Lexington, Kentucky, from April 2010 through July 2010 for between \$5 and \$10. They were made in China. Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled lamps and contact CDX Group to return the lamps to the place where purchased for a full refund. Source: <http://www.consumeraffairs.com/recalls04/2010/cdx-group-recalls-desk-and-table-lamps.html>

Toyota recalls 2011 Sienna vans. Toyota is recalling about 94,000 Sienna vans from the 2011 model year. The company said the brake stop light switch could be damaged when the parking brake is applied. The problem could result in brake drag and reduced brake effectiveness. Dealers will replace the faulty bracket assembly free of charge when the recall begins in January 2011. Source: <http://www.consumeraffairs.com/recalls04/2010/toyota-recalls-2011-sienna-vans.html>

Boeing safety claims investigated. An Al Jazeera documentary released December 15 raised serious questions about official investigations into the safety of more than 1,500 of the most commonly-used passenger planes in the world. Boeing's 737NG is flown by more than 150 airlines worldwide, but for

more than 10 years, whistleblowers who used to work for Boeing have raised serious doubts about the manufacture of key structural parts for many of the planes. The parts in question are called “chords” and “bear straps”: the chords make up the ribs of the aircraft fuselage and the bear straps are huge sheets which reinforce the exits and doorways on the fuselage. The whistleblowers have made claims in a U.S. court that the parts — made by a subcontractor for Boeing between 1996 and 2004 — were ill-fitting and illegal, but that Boeing used many of them to build the aircraft. Aviation experts working with these whistleblowers tell the program that the problem with these parts could lead to a “catastrophic failure” of aircraft fitted with them. Source:

<http://english.aljazeera.net/video/americas/2010/12/2010121516520679770.html>

Chrysler, Volkswagen recalling vehicles over air bag issues, fuel leaks. Chrysler and Volkswagen announced large recalls December 15 to address potential accidental air bag deployments and possible fuel leaks. Chrysler Group LLC said it was recalling more than 367,000 minivans to address potential accidental air bag deployments in 2008 model year Chrysler Town and Country and Dodge Grand Caravan minivans. The automaker said water could leak near the heating and air conditioner drain. That could cause the air bag warning light to go off and deploy the air bag by accident. A Chrysler spokesman said the automaker was aware of 30 complaints of air bags deploying inadvertently and 5 injuries since February 2008. Volkswagen of America is recalling more than 228,000 vehicles, including 2007-2009 model year Golf, Jetta, Jetta Sportwagen, Rabbit, and 2006-2010 New Beetle small cars. VW says on all of the recalled vehicles except the New Beetle, a small plastic tab in the windshield wiper fluid reservoir could rub against a fuel supply line under the hood. A fuel leak could develop and lead to fires. On New Beetles under recall, a fastening clamp on the hydraulic hose of the power steering system could be located in the wrong place and rub against a fuel supply line under the hood. It could also lead to a fuel leak and a fire. A VW spokesman said there had been no reports of fires, crashes, or injuries. Chrysler’s recall is expected to begin in February 2011 and dealers will replace the drain ring free of charge. Volkswagen is beginning its recall in late January 2011, and dealers will either remove the plastic tab or inspect the position of the clamp and adjust it free of charge. Source:

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/nation/wire/sns-ap-us-chrysler-volkswagen-recalls,0,1543277.story>

DEFENSE/ INDUSTRY BASE SECTOR

Missile defense program failed second test in a row, U.S. says. A test of the U.S. missile defense program failed December 15, the second in a row involving the system, the Defense Department said. The Missile Defense Agency provided no preliminary explanation of the failure, the seventh out of 15 tries for the program. “This is a tremendous setback for the testing of this complicated system,” the head of the Missile Defense Advocacy Alliance said in a statement. He said it raised troubling questions about the reliability of the 30 or so interceptor missiles deployed in silos in Alaska and California. A spokeswoman for Boeing, which manages the missile defense project, did not immediately respond to a request for comment. The multibillion-dollar, ground-based bulwark is designed to shoot down a limited number of long-range ballistic missiles that could be tipped with chemical, biological, or nuclear warheads. The system is part of a layered hedge against countries such as North Korea and Iran. Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/12/15/AR2010121508236.html>

EMERGENCY SERVICES

(Georgia) Police: Volunteer firefighter a serial arsonist. A former LaFayette, Georgia volunteer firefighter sat handcuffed and blank-faced December 15 as a judge read an arson charge against him. Police believe the 33-year-old man, who began volunteering with the city fire department in 2005, is a serial arsonist responsible for setting a slew of fires in vacant houses in the last 5 years. While he has been charged with only one count of arson, for a fire on Ryan Road, a sergeant with the LaFayette Police Department said police hope to have enough evidence to indict him on about 20 counts when the grand jury meets in January 2011. According to the sergeant, the man was interviewed December 15 and admitted setting many fires in the last 5 years, mostly with gasoline. The man told investigators he “just liked fighting fires.” By December 16, the man had posted a \$10,000 bond and was released from the Walker County Jail, a detention officer said. In the last 11 years, Georgia has arrested and convicted more than 25 firefighters for arson charges, the state fire marshal said. Source: <http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/dec/16/police-volunteer-firefighter-a-serial-arsonist/>

(Arizona) Border Patrol agent killed in southern Ariz. The U.S. Border Patrol has confirmed that one of its agents has been killed in southern Arizona. The Border Patrol spokesman confirmed the agent’s death to the Associated Press December 15. He told KTVK-TV the agent was shot and killed after confronting several suspects near Rio Rico north of Nogales. At least four people are in custody and possibly one more remains at large. He said the FBI and the Santa Cruz Sheriff’s Office is investigating the agent’s death. Source: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/special/immigration/7340067.html>

(New Mexico) 911 service interrupted in 9 counties. Severed fiber optic cables interrupted 911, Internet, and phone service in at least nine counties around New Mexico December 14. By 10 p.m., service in all counties was restored though some counties were still reporting sporadic service. Qwest officials said outside contractors accidentally cut two separate cables December 14. One cable was cut in Tijeras affecting Bernalillo and Tarrant counties. A cable cut in Socorro affected communication through much of southern New Mexico. Qwest officials said the Socorro cable was repaired by 7 p.m while the cable in Tijeras should be repaired by midnight. The state’s emergency operations center reported service was restored in Bernalillo, Chavez, Dona Ana, Eddy, Luna, Otero, Sierra, Socorro, and Tarrant counties. However, the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security advised that some counties were still reporting sporadic service. Source: <http://www.kob.com/article/stories/S1882997.shtml?cat=516>

(Texas) Vehicle discovered at police station with ammunition, chemicals. A suspicious vehicle at an El Paso, Texas, police station brought out the bomb squad and hazmat unit December 12. El Paso police did not say much about the vehicle left by someone in the El Paso Police Department’s Pebble Hills Regional Command parking lot. “At this point, all we can say is that it was taken to Pebble Hills at approximately 10:30 this morning [Sunday],” an El Paso police officer said. The items spotted inside the vehicle forced officers to close the parking lot and shut down part of Pebble Hills Boulevard for hours. “It contained miscellaneous types of ammunition and unknown types of chemicals,” the officer told KFOX 14. Since the car was loaded with ammunition and chemicals, officers called for extra help. “The bomb squad was on-call to safely remove the ammunition from the vehicle, and at that point, the Hazardous Materials Team was on-call to go ahead and secure the vehicle, and secure the chemicals,” he said. While the parking lot was closed, police told KFOX the regional command

remained open during this entire situation, and that police duties were not affected. Source: <http://www.kfoxtv.com/news/26110178/detail.html>

ENERGY

EPA regulations may shut 50,000 MW of coal plants. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations may result in over 50,000 megawatts (MW) of coal power plant retirements and up to \$180 billion in compliance costs for remaining plants, consulting firm The Brattle Group said in a report. Before considering the potential effect of possible government efforts to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to combat global warming, the report estimated 40,000 to 55,000 MW of coal capacity could retire if the EPA mandates further reductions of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, particulates, mercury and other harmful emissions by 2015. Brattle said another 11,000 to 12,000 MW could retire if cooling towers are also required, bringing total retirements to 50,000 to 67,000 MW, or roughly 20 percent of installed coal plant capacity. Most of the retirements would be merchant plants (47,000 to 56,000 MW, or up to three-quarters of the entire merchant coal fleet), Brattle said, with significantly fewer retirements of regulated coal-fired plants. The retirements would be especially large in the Midwest, representing up to 72 percent of all coal plants, and up to 15 percent of total installed generating capacity, Brattle said. For the units that would not retire, Brattle said energy companies will have to invest between \$100 billion and \$180 billion to comply with the EPA's mandates to install emissions control equipment and cooling towers. Assuming all of the lost generation from coal plants would be replaced by gas-fired combined-cycle plants, Brattle said CO2 emissions could fall by 150 million tons per year, or about 7 percent of all CO2 emissions from the electric power sector. Source: <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6B82UI20101209>

U.S. selects 24 solar power zones to streamline project approvals. The U.S. government gave preliminary approval for solar energy projects at 24 sites on federal land in six states, a step that may allow energy companies to develop them sooner. The Interior Secretary and the U.S. Energy Department announced the "solar energy zones" during a conference call December 16. The decision would create an environmental-impact evaluation before developers apply for permission to build and may speed the application process, a spokesman said. Early approval could also identify the best use of existing transmission lines, he said. The sites listed in the Draft Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement may support up to 24,000 megawatts of solar power on 214,000 acres, he said. Federal agencies evaluated 675,000 acres for potential solar development in Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah. The agency announced the locations in July. Environmental groups objected to some of the sites, saying they are too close to national parks or could endanger sensitive wildlife populations. Source: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-12-16/u-s-selects-solar-power-zones-to-streamline-project-approval-process.html>

Data privacy a primary concern in the smart grid world. Privacy has emerged as the number one concern related to data security and management, with data governance as an emerging concern, according to IDC Energy Insights. As utilities implement new initiatives such as smart metering, data volumes are expected to increase significantly. However, the survey revealed that, while management and integration of this data are a priority, respondents overwhelmingly report data privacy as the key element of IT strategic plans for security. Another finding is that one third of the utilities surveyed noted that IT is not involved in developing business cases for new initiatives such as renewable generation, energy efficiency, smarter distribution grids, and smart metering. Even more

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worrisome is that for 13 percent of utilities, IT does not become involved until the project is well under way. Source: <http://www.net-security.org/secworld.php?id=10304>

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

(California) Japanese hard candy contains high levels of lead contamination says CDPH. Butter Ball orange-colored, hard candy was found to contain high levels of lead warned by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) December 16. The CDPH is asking consumers that may have purchased the candy to throw it out and not eat it. The candy was tested and was found to have as much as 0.16 parts per million of lead, which exceeds the California lead standards not to exceed 0.10 parts per million. The Butter Ball candy is packaged in a plastic bag that has Japanese characters on the front with the words "Butter Ball" and "Tasteful & Good Flavor." Source: http://www.bestsyndication.com/?q=20101216_japanese_hard_candy_lead_contamination_brand_warns_cdpht.htm

48 million Americans suffer foodborne illness each year. About one in six Americans, or roughly 48 million people, are sickened from foodborne illnesses each year, according to new estimates released December 15 by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Of those, nearly 3,000 are killed and 128,000 require hospitalization, the health agency said. The figures are the first comprehensive estimates since 1999, and are the CDC's first to include illnesses caused solely by foods consumed in the United States. The CDC's report said roughly 90 percent of estimated illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths were due to seven pathogens: Salmonella, norovirus, Campylobacter, Toxoplasma, E.coli O157, Listeria and Clostridium perfringens. Among the findings for foodborne illnesses due to known pathogens, Salmonella was the leading cause of hospitalizations and deaths, responsible for about 28 percent of deaths and 35 percent of hospitalizations due to known pathogens transmitted by food. Source: http://www.redorbit.com/news/health/1967416/48_million_americans_suffer_foodborne_illness_each_year/

(Iowa) FDA allows Iowa farm to return to retail egg sales. Months after the deadly outbreak of salmonella from tainted eggs, the Iowa farms that were tracked down and held responsible for the outbreak are being allowed to return to the market. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the farmers have changed all necessary protocols and have also taken part in some education to better prepare them for such problems in the future. The outbreak of salmonella was the worst case the United States has ever seen. The eggs were being produced by chickens that were carrying salmonella. These chickens were infected because of improperly stored feed. The feed for the livestock was left out in the open air. As moisture was allowed to get in, the bacteria that causes salmonella was allowed to grow and led to the outbreak. Source: <http://www.newswatchinternational.com/fda-allows-iowa-farm-to-return-to-retail-egg-sales-213417.html>

2010 meat and; poultry recalls: over 27 million lbs. More than 27 million pounds of meat and poultry were recalled in 2010 by processors regulated by USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). This year, more than 21 million pounds of beef, pork, and poultry were recalled for a long list of infractions including ineligible imports, foreign materials, undeclared allergens, animal drug abuse,

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and more. A half dozen Salmonella-based recalls were responsible for more than half of the 5.947 million pounds of meat and poultry recalled for bacterial contamination. Salmonella accounted for the recalls on 3.229 million pounds. Food Safety News reported December 14 there were 11 meat and poultry recalls during 2010 for E. coli contamination. A total of 2.339 million pounds were E. coli-based recalls. That was double the amount recalled in 2009, but still low when compared with many previous years. Fear of Listeria contamination was responsible for seven, mostly small FSIS recalls.

Source: <http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2010/12/meat-poultry-recalls-over-27-million-lbs-in-2010/>

(Wyoming) Grasshopper outbreak brings disaster declaration. Farmers and ranchers in western Wyoming may be able to get assistance because of damage caused by grasshoppers in September. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has declared Fremont County a primary disaster area and said farmers and ranchers there may qualify for emergency loans based on their losses. Farmers and ranchers in surrounding counties are also eligible. Those counties are Carbon, Hot Springs, Natrona, Park, Sublette, Sweetwater, Teton, and Washakie. Anyone who suffered at least a 30 percent loss in normal production per acre or per animal based on a 3-year average qualifies. The grasshopper outbreak devastated alfalfa and other grass crops. Source:

<http://www.cattlenetwork.com/Grasshopper-Outbreak-Brings-Disaster-Declaration/2010-12-15/Article.aspx?oid=1291375&fid=>

Southern farmers struggle with drought in U.S. Farmers across the South in the United States are contending with abnormally dry weather and a drought that began the spring of 2010. Crops in dry fields then baked during stretches of record-setting summer heat that scorched peanut fields, stressed cotton plants, and stunted citrus fruit. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has declared disasters in parts of 16 states, with some of the driest spots in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. The dry spell will likely continue in Georgia. A University of Georgia professor, the state's climatologist, said dry conditions are common after a wet winter like last year's that was caused by the El Nino weather pattern. Three-quarters of Alabama's land is either abnormally dry or in a drought. Conditions are worst in east-central Alabama near the Georgia line, where some areas are about 10 inches below normal for the year after going without rain for more than 2 months during the crucial late-summer growing season. Abnormally dry conditions in North Carolina have covered much of the state since April, with 18 counties in the west and central regions still experiencing a moderate drought. Source: <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/12/13/farmers-across-the-south- n 795881.html>

Walnut recall expanded nationwide. Another company is recalling products containing walnuts supplied by Atlas Walnuts of Visalia, California, because they may contain Salmonella. In a news release, Tropical Nut & Fruit of Charlotte, North Carolina, said it was recalling all its products containing walnuts supplied by Atlas Walnuts and distributed nationwide to retail stores, manufacturers, and other distributors. Earlier in December, Mojave Foods Corporation recalled 60 packages of El Guapo Shelled Walnut, supplied by Atlas Walnuts and distributed only in retail stores in Southern California. Atlas Walnuts said it recalled its product after one of its customers reported a positive result for Salmonella. The company said it conducted additional Salmonella tests on the same product lot and those results were negative, according to an announcement December 13 from Tropical Nut & Fruit. Source: <http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2010/12/walnut-recall-expands-nationwide/>

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(Florida) Orange juice jumps to three-year high on Florida cold. Orange juice futures jumped to a 3-year high in New York on speculation cold weather will damage the crop in Florida, the biggest U.S. grower of oranges. Florida's governor declared a state of emergency December 10 because of the threat of possible damage to agriculture crops. Florida also produces strawberries and sugar. Temperatures in central and northern Florida may fall to between 26 degrees and 34 degrees Fahrenheit late December 13, a senior meteorologist at AccuWeather Inc. said. Orange-juice futures rose 32 percent this year on concern dry and cold weather would damage Florida's crop. Source: <http://www.businessweek.com/news/2010-12-13/orange-juice-jumps-to-three-year-high-on-florida-cold.html>

(California; Hawaii) Chicken recalled for not listing whey as allergen. California's Pampanga Food Company Inc., based in Anaheim, is recalling approximately 14,430 pounds of sauteed chicken products because they contain an undeclared allergen, whey, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) announced December 10. A Class I, High Health risk recall, it is the 66th of the year involving either meat or poultry. The products subject to recall are 30-pound cases of "Pampanga Sauteed Chicken," with each case containing 3-pound bags. Each package bears the establishment number "P-9029-A" inside the USDA mark of inspection as well as a packaging date between May 6, 2010 and December 6, 2010. Each case has a production date appearing as a lot number ranging from "0506" to "1203." The products were sent to distribution centers for further sale to restaurants in both California and Hawaii. Source: <http://www.foodsafetynews.com/2010/12/chicken-recalled-for-not-listing-whey-as-allergen/>

GOVERNMENT SECTOR (INCLUDING SCHOOLS AND UNIVERSITIES)

Bomb targets US Embassy vehicle in Yemen. U.S. and Yemeni officials said a group of American embassy personnel came under attack December 15 when a bomb exploded near their vehicle outside a restaurant in Yemen's capital. A U.S. State Department spokesman said no one was injured in the blast, which took place in a commercial district of Sana'a. An investigation is ongoing. Another U.S. official said the explosion disabled the vehicle, and that the embassy believes it was "likely" an attempt to target U.S. interests. Yemeni officials said police arrested several suspects, including a Jordanian in his 20s. They said the attacker threw a hand grenade at a car carrying a number of Americans as it was parked outside a restaurant frequented by foreign nationals. It is unclear whether the attack is linked to al-Qaida militants in the country. Source: <http://www.voanews.com/english/news/middle-east/Bomb-Targets-US-Embassy-Vehicle-in-Yemen-112020384.html>

(California; Massachusetts) Hackers attack Santa Cruz County government website. A little-known Massachusetts-based group that says it will fight for freedom at all costs is claiming responsibility for shutting down the Santa Cruz County, California, government Web site December 16. The site, the Internet home of the district attorney, the sheriff, and other county offices, was largely inaccessible to the public for about 30 minutes shortly after noon. County officials acknowledge someone from the outside interrupted the site's operation. They do not know who it was. The sheriff's office is investigating and the FBI has been contacted, county officials said. The information services director explained the problem as a brief interruption for the viewing public but said no internal systems or information were compromised. "It's just a nuisance," he said. "They're not causing any damage."

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They can't get in to do anything." The Peoples Liberation Front, whose Web site details a mission of fighting for global freedom using "cyber warfare," sent an e-mail to several news organizations December 15 announcing it would launch a cyber attack on Santa Cruz County the next day. The e-mail said the attack was a response to the unfair prosecution of Santa Cruz demonstrators in the so-called Peace Camp 2010 last summer. Source:

http://www.montereyherald.com/state/ci_16882901?nclink_check=1

(Ohio) Server hacked at OSU; 760,000 affected. Ohio State University (OSU) is notifying up to 760,000 students, professors, and others that their names and Social Security numbers might have made it to cyberspace in one of the largest and most costly breaches to hit a college campus. Ohio State expects to spend about \$4 million to pay for the forensic investigation and credit-protection services for those whose personal information was on a server that was hacked. University officials started notifying current and former students, employees, and businesses that have done work with the school about the breach December 15. There is no indication that any personal information was taken or that the incident will result in identity theft for any of the affected people, a provost said. In late October, a routine computer security review uncovered suspicious activity on a campus server with the names, Social Security numbers, birth dates, and addresses of up to 760,000 people associated with the university, including applicants, contractors, and consultants, he said. No OSU Medical Center patient records or student health records were involved. Source:

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/12/16/server-hacked-at-osu-760000-affected.html?sid=101

(Nevada) Escobedo Middle School evacuated after suspicious package found. Clark County School District and Metro Police evacuated parts of Escobedo Middle School near North Durango Drive and the Beltway in Las Vegas, Nevada, for several hours December 15 due to a suspicious device. The device was discovered around 8 p.m. on the school grounds. A school event was underway at the time of the discovery. When authorities arrived, they transported the students and visitors to a secure location. Metro Police then conducted a sweep of the school for the suspicious package. Metro directed loved ones of those at the school to wait at Thompson Elementary School until the ordeal ended. Police dismantled the device, which was not explosive, between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m. They released the students and visitors a short time later. Source:

<http://www.8newsnow.com/story/13681799/escobedo-middle-school-evacuated>

(California) Suspicious package found at Santa Cruz County DA's house contains book, letter. A suspicious package found December 14 outside a district attorney's home in Santa Cruz, California turned out to be a letter and a book from a man recently named in a restraining order against a female prosecutor, authorities said. Chilverton Street was closed most of the morning from North Branciforte to Poplar avenues as the bomb squad and its robot examined the package discovered by the district attorney around 8 a.m. as he stepped out of his house and into the rain. He said the 5-by-8-inch package was covered in white, plastic grocery bags and had indecipherable writing on it. Finding it suspicious, he called authorities. The bomb squad eventually opened it, finding a letter that contained Bible verses, and a book, which the district attorney declined to identify. Police believe the package came from a 51-year-old male who the week of December 6 was ordered to stay away from a female prosecutor in the district attorney's office after he reportedly stalked her. The male, who has a criminal record, also was ordered to stay away from the courthouse and the county building, authorities said. The district attorney did not call the package a threat, but he said he has been

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physically threatened. Source:

http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/ci_16862133?source=most_viewed

(Florida) Gunman fires at Fla. school board, kills self. An ex-convict calmly held a Bay District school board at gunpoint December 14 in Panama City, Florida, complaining about taxes and his wife being fired before shooting at close range as the superintendent begged, "Please don't." Minutes earlier, the room had been filled with students accepting awards, but no one was hurt except the gunman, who shot himself after exchanging fire with a security guard, police said. "It could have been a monumental tragedy," Bay District Schools' superintendent said. Video of the meeting shows the 56-year-old rising from his seat, spray-painting a red V on the wall, then waving a gun and ordering everyone to leave the room except the men on the board. They dove under the long desk they had been sitting behind as he fired at them. The gunman's motivation was still murky December 15. He rambled to the board about tax increases and his wife, but also apparently created a Facebook page the week of December 6 that refers to class warfare and is laced with images from the movie "V for Vendetta," in which a mysterious figure battles a totalitarian government. Source:

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=132060238>

(Ohio) Man arrested over alleged threats to shoot Kenyon College students. A Knox County, Ohio, man was arrested the weekend of December 11 and 12 after allegedly threatening to shoot students at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio. The suspect faces charges of inducing panic, deputies said December 13. According to the Knox County Sheriff's Office, Kenyon College safety officers notified deputies of a conversation the man had in a Gambier bar December 11. In that conversation, the suspect allegedly said he was going to shoot students at the college so police would shoot him. "It was reported to our campus safety office who then reported it to the sheriff's office," a Kenyon spokesman said. "We are on heightened alert now. Our residence halls are locked." The college has also increased the number of safety officers patrolling campus. The suspect said it was all a mistake, but the Knox County sheriff and college officials do not agree. He was taken into custody later that same night without incident at his home in Gambier. Deputies said a semi-automatic rifle and four, 30-round magazines for the weapon were found at the man's home, but no ammunition for the gun was found. The man was released on bail December 13. Source:

<http://www.10tv.com/live/content/local/stories/2010/12/13/story-gambier-man-arrested-kenyon-college-threats.html>

Threats of violence against IRS employees persist. Assaults, bomb threats, and intimidation continue among the impediments faced by Internal Revenue Service (IRS) employees in carrying out their duties, according to the latest semiannual report released December 8 to Congress from the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration. As part of its statutory mission, the Treasury IG investigates threats and attacks against IRS employees, property and data infrastructure, and the report, which covers the period April through September 2010, said employees contend with "increasing threats," attributing some of the new dangers to the Internet. The IG's Office of Investigations "has continued to aggressively pursue those who threaten the safety and security of IRS personnel, data and facilities, or who otherwise attempt to corruptly impact the integrity of the IRS and the federal system of tax administration," the report said. The report comes during a political climate of rising hostility toward federal taxation and nine months after an IRS employee died when a tax protester flew a small aircraft into a federal building in Austin, Texas. Source:

<http://www.govexec.com/dailyfed/1210/121010cc1.htm>

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(Wisconsin) University of Wisconsin warns of major data breach. Tens of thousands of former University of Wisconsin students and staff members the week of December 13 continued to receive advisory letters from the university, warning them that hackers managed to break into a database containing their Social Security numbers and other sensitive information. It appears the hackers had unbridled access to the database for more than 2 years, putting at least 60,000 former students and employees at risk. School officials first began notifying affected individuals November 30, almost 1 month after the breach was first detected. According to University of Wisconsin officials, the data breach was discovered in late October, when the Wisconsin Union, which administers the campus ID card program, noticed that a database was repeatedly accessed going back as far as January 2008. A compromised file in the database included Social Security numbers associated with individual photo IDs and names. Source: <http://www.esecurityplanet.com/news/article.php/3916921/article.htm>

Virtual nuke testing system data at risk. The United States has not conducted an underground nuclear weapons test since 1992, instead relying on supercomputers to simulate the effects of changes to weapon systems, calculate the confidence of future untested systems, and ensure compliance with military requirements. In a report to the House Energy and Commerce Committee made public December 9, the Government Accountability Office questioned the effectiveness of contingency and disaster recovery plans employed by the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), the agency that oversees management of the supercomputers at three Energy Department laboratories: Los Alamos, Sandia, and Lawrence Livermore. "Until the agency fully implements a contingency and disaster recovery planning program for its weapons laboratories, it has limited assurance that vital information can be recovered and made available to meet national security priorities and requirements," said the GAO report: National Nuclear Security Administration Needs to Improve Contingency Planning for Its Classified Supercomputing Operations. GAO said all three labs have implemented some components of a contingency planning and disaster recovery program, but the NNSA hasn't provided effective oversight to ensure they have comprehensive and effective contingency and disaster recovery planning and testing. "Due to lack of planning and analysis by NNSA and the laboratories, the impact of a system outage is unclear," GAO said. Source: http://www.govinfosecurity.com/articles.php?art_id=3162

(Pennsylvania) Pa. man charged in Facebook threats against school. Federal authorities said an unemployed amusement park worker in eastern Pennsylvania threatened to carry out "the most heinous school shooting ever imagined." The FBI said a Bethlehem resident made that threat and others on Facebook after he was fired from nearby Dorney Park and Wildwood Kingdom in October. The suspect was charged December 9 with interstate communication of threats. He is in federal custody pending a bail hearing December 13. Authorities said the suspect posted a threat November 16 that said there are "Enough elementary schools in a 10-mile radius to initiate the most heinous school shooting ever imagined." It continued: "And hell hath no fury like a crazy man in a Kindergarten class." The public defender's office did not immediately return a request for comment. Source: http://www.ldnews.com/news/ci_16818506

Bomb squad lift cordon from U.S. Consulate in Auckland CBD. Police closed Customs Street East in Auckland, New Zealand, after the discovery of a "suspicious substance" in the basement of the Citigroup building in Customs St East — home of the U.S. Consulate. Police have since lifted the cordon, and traffic and pedestrians are allowed to move around as normal. Bomb squad personnel

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arrived on the scene around 4:15 p.m., donning flak jackets. Police, ambulance, and fire officers were also on the scene. As well as vehicle and pedestrian access being blocked, people were unable to access a series of Britomart bus stops, Sal's Pizza, or NBR's head office, which is directly across the street from the Citigroup building. There was no word on what sparked the incident or whether a device was found.

Source: <http://www.nbr.co.nz/article/suspicious-substance-found-basement-us-consulate-central-auckland-134630>

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Malware targeting Google Android quadruples in 2010. Malware aimed at Google's Android mobile operating system rose fourfold in 2010, compared to 2009, research has shown. This represented the most significant jump in comparison to other platforms, claimed mobile security specialists AdaptiveMobile. Reported exploits targeting the iPhone fell, as did new Symbian malware, which dropped by 11 percent. However, the overall number of mobile malware infections reported went up 33 percent, again compared with 2009 figures. Source:

<http://www.securecomputing.net.au/News/241877,malware-targeting-google-android-quadruples-in-2010.aspx>

Hacked websites used to create counterfeit software stores. Security researchers have observed new attacks using compromised Web sites to create rogue online stores that sell counterfeit software and are promoted in Google. Compromised Web sites are a common component in many attacks, but are generally used as doorways to drive-by downloads, scareware pages, or spam sites. Users landing on an infected page are normally taken through a series of redirects that perform various checks, until they arrive at the final attack page. In the case of black hat search engine optimization (BHSEO) campaigns, legit compromised Web sites are used to poison the results for popular search keywords or topics. When the search engine crawlers arrive at such sites, they are served with content pertaining to the targeted search keywords and will index them accordingly. However, when users find the links on Google and click on them, they are automatically taken to a external page under the attackers' control. Source: <http://news.softpedia.com/news/Hacked-Websites-Used-to-Create-Counterfeit-Software-Stores-172644.shtml>

Fake Hallmark Christmas card emails carry malware. Security researchers warn about a new wave of fake e-mails purporting to come from Hallmark, which try to pass a computer Trojan as a Christmas card. According to Belgian e-mail security vendor MX Lab, the e-mails began circulating the week of December 6 and have a subject of "1st Christmas Card." Their header is spoofed to appear as if they originate from card@hallmark(dot)com and they are using a Hallmark e-mail template that mimics the look of the company's Web site. The message suggests the attackers do not only spread these fake e-mails on their own, but also try to socially engineer recipients to do it for them. The e-mails carry an attached archive file called SnowFairy.zip, which contains a 610 kB-large SnowFairy.exe executable. The file is a Trojan that has a relatively high AV detection rate, according to Virus Total. Source: <http://news.softpedia.com/news/Fake-Hallmark-E-Card-Emails-Carry-Malware-172361.shtml>

Gawker hack triggers password resets at major sites. Yahoo, Twitter, and LinkedIn have asked users to change their details, days after gossip site Gawker was hacked. Online game World of Warcraft, which has more than 12 million subscribers, has also asked some users to reset their passwords.

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Blizzard, the company behind the game, said it was an attempt to “minimize the effects” of the Gawker breach. Although thousands of Twitter accounts were compromised after the attack, there have been few other reports of damage directly linked to the breach. Many companies, however, have taken steps to identify users at risk and warn them before an exploit can take place. A spokesman for LinkedIn said it is necessary to take “proactive security measures” to screen users thought to be in danger. Source: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-11998648>

Feds probe ‘100 site’ data breach. FBI agents looking into the theft of customer data belonging to McDonald’s are investigating similar breaches that may have hit more than 100 other companies that used e-mail marketing services from Atlanta, Georgia-based Silverpop Systems. “The breach is with Silverpop, an e-mail service provider that has over 105 customers,” said a special agent in the FBI’s Atlanta field office, told The Register. “It appears to be emanating from an overseas location.” He declined to provide further details. Over the past week, at least two other sites – one known to have ties to Silverpop and the other that appears to – offered similar warnings to their customers. deviantART, a Web site that boasts more than 16 million registered accounts, warned its users that their e-mail addresses, user names, and birth dates were exposed to suspected spammers as a result of a breach at the e-mail provider. Source:

http://www.theregister.co.uk/2010/12/15/silverpop_breach_probe/

Hacktivism and social engineering emerge as top threats. Hacktivism and more profit-oriented malware, social engineering, and malicious codes with the ability to adapt to avoid detection will be the main threats in the coming year, according to PandaLabs. There will also be an increase in the threats to Mac users, new efforts to attack 64-bit systems and zero-day exploits. The major security trends of 2011 are: malware creation, cyber war, cyber-protests, social engineering, BlackHat SEO attacks, Windows 7 influencing malware development, mobile phones, Mac, HTML5, and highly dynamic and encrypted threats. Source: <http://www.net-security.org/secworld.php?id=10311>

Google issues security update for Chrome 8. Google has released version 8.0.552.224 of Chrome for Windows, Mac OS X, and Linux into its Stable and Beta channels. The security update addresses a total of five vulnerabilities in the WebKit-based browser, two of which are rated as “High” priority. One of the high risk issues affects only 64-bit versions of Linux, while the other relates to stale pointers in cursor handling. Other issues include browser crashes due to bad extensions, CSS parsing problems, and a NULL pointer issue in web worker handling. Further details of the vulnerabilities are being withheld until “a majority of users are up-to-date with the fix”. Source: <http://www.h-online.com/security/news/item/Google-issues-security-update-for-Chrome-8-1152553.html>

Twitter fast-spreading spam attack linked to Gawker compromise. A spam attack promoting acai berry diets is quickly spreading on Twitter and apparently it uses hundreds of thousands of accounts hijacked following the Gawker database compromise. The flood of spam messages began December 13 and are among the lines of “Lost 10lbs using acai berry! RT This! [link]” or “Im not gaining weight this year cuz of acai berry! [link].” The advertised domains contain “acainews” in their name, but as a senior technology consultant at Sophos noted, they could change at any time. The links take users to an article on a fake a news Webs ite, which displays the logos of ABC, Fox News, CNN, CBS, and USA Today, in order to gain credibility. The goal is to trick visitors into buying weight loss products. This aggressive spam attack has been linked to a compromise of Gawker user accounts that happened the

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weekend of December 12. Source: <http://news.softpedia.com/news/Twitter-Fast-Spreading-Spam-Attack-Linked-to-Gawker-Compromise-172206.shtml>

NATIONAL MONUMENTS AND ICONS

(New Mexico) Grass fire consumes more than 8,000 acres. A grass fire sparked by downed power lines December 15 burned an estimated 8,000 to 10,000 acres about 14 miles south of Elida, New Mexico. Speaking from the scene as crews finished mopping up hot spots, Elida's fire chief said the fire started about 3 p.m. and burned oil field equipment, power lines and one old barn near an unoccupied house before crews had it under control about 6:30 p.m. No one was injured. About 40 people and 27 fire trucks from Elida, Dora, Portales, Milnesand, Floyd, Melrose, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management facility in Roswell fought the fire. Roosevelt County Road Department provided four road graders to make fire lines, and a private rancher provided another. Source: <http://www.pntonline.com/news/fire-23657-acres-grass.html>

POSTAL AND SHIPPING

Feds seize 11 tons of pot. Federal agents followed an 11-ton shipment of marijuana as it traveled by rail from Eagle Pass, Texas, to its destination — a Chicago, Illinois warehouse — over the past month. The result was the largest single seizure of marijuana ever in the Chicago area. The 21,800 pounds of pot were recovered in a storage warehouse in the 1200 block of South State Road in Chicago Heights. Seven people — at least three of whom are U.S. citizens — have now been charged in connection with the drug case, the U.S. Attorney said. The drugs, which never reached the streets, have an estimated street value of \$22 million. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agents inspected the train cars about 1 month ago at a Texas border town, and sent in drug-sniffing dogs after becoming suspicious about the cargo, officials said. In six cars, agents observed a number of large bundled packages and a canine alerted officers to the presence of narcotics. The cargo was allowed to reach its destination earlier this month so agents could watch and videotape the drugs being unloaded. One of the suspects allegedly spoke to a Union Pacific railroad employee on multiple occasions to coordinate delivery of the train cars to the warehouse. Throughout last week, agents using court-authorized video recording inside the facility and aerial surveillance observed individuals unloading bundles from rail cars, according to the affidavit. Source: <http://www.post-trib.com/news/2971742,new-potbust1217.article>

(Idaho) Suspicious package prompts post office evacuation. A suspicious package prompted the evacuation of the Mountain Home Post Office in Idaho around 4:30 p.m. December 14. According to sources at the scene, a customer identified a large package left in the post office lobby for approximately an hour, which initiated the evacuation. While the package did not feature any characteristics that would raise suspicions, it was large enough to require an evacuation, according to post office officials. As a precaution, law enforcement officers established a two-block cordon around the building for approximately 25 minutes until the area was declared safe, and the package was moved to the dock area of the post office for further analysis. The owner was eventually identified and the package declared innocuous. Source: <http://www.mountainhomenews.com/story/1687826.html>

PUBLIC HEALTH

Assaults more common than shooting in hospitals. In the aftermath of a September shooting of a Johns Hopkins Hospital doctor in Baltimore, Maryland, by the distraught son of a patient, a pair of Hopkins researchers looked into how common such an event is. They determined that shootings are rare. Other assaults are higher, though. The rate of assaults in all private-sector workplaces is 2 per 10,000, compared to 8 per 10,000 in healthcare settings, according to the doctors conducting the study. They wrote about this in a commentary in the December 8 issue of the Journal of the American Medical Association. They concluded that hospital shootings get all the media attention, but security experts said there should be more of a focus on preventing the assaults. That is why installing magnetometers and other expensive high-tech devices is not called for, said the professor and chair of Hopkins' department of emergency medicine. The researchers found that most shootings also happen outside of the health facilities. Source:

<http://www.bellinghamherald.com/2010/12/16/1773827/assaults-more-common-than-shooting.html>

White House report addresses security of healthcare exchanges. Healthcare breaches rose dramatically in 2010, while new data shows securing patient data is a low priority at most healthcare organizations — all amid the backdrop of the industry's adoption of electronic medical records (EMRs). Meanwhile, the White House-appointed President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST), which includes experts from academia, nongovernmental organizations, and industry, published a report late the week of December 6 that calls for the federal government to set up a universal standard for the secure exchange of health information electronically among various hospitals and institutions, as well as ways to fund the development of healthcare information exchanges. Among the key concerns in the healthcare industry's transition to EMRs is the security of so-called healthcare exchanges — networks that serve as the vehicle whereby doctors, labs, insurance companies, and other related parties share patient information electronically. The bottom line is healthcare providers gather more than just medical records. "They are collecting personal, medical, and financial information," the head of Verizon's Innovation Incubation Group said. The White House's new "Realizing the Full Potential of Health Information Technology to Improve Healthcare for Americans: The Path Forward" recommendations are an important step toward helping make the move to EMRs more secure than the status quo, he said. Source:

<http://www.darkreading.com/authentication/167901072/security/news/228800297/white-house-report-addresses-security-of-healthcare-exchanges.html>

Budget cuts endanger biodefense preparedness, report says. An analysis issued December 14 said the continuing U.S. economic crisis remains a danger to states' efforts to ready themselves for acts of bioterrorism or other health crises, the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) reported. The Trust for America's Health issued its annual report on state public health operations, "Ready or Not? Protecting the Public's Health from Diseases, Disasters and Bioterrorism." The organization found funding for public health operations was lower in 2009-10 than the previous year in 33 states and the District of Columbia. It was the second consecutive year of budget reductions in 18 states, and 53 percent of local health agencies said in January their main financial support was down from the previous year. Federal financing for public health readiness has dropped by 27 percent since fiscal 2005, accounting for inflation, the group said. The news was not all bad, CIDRAP reported. The Trust rated states' preparedness based on 10 factors, including funding levels, surge

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capacity at disease laboratories, health information systems, and ability to identify and document a food-carried disease. "Overall, states have the highest scores ever for emergency preparedness," the Trust's executive director stated. Source: http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20101215_6241.php

(Maryland) Narcotics stolen in well-planned robbery. Police in Baltimore, Maryland, said a pharmaceutical delivery driver was abducted and narcotics were stolen from his truck in a well-planned and unusual robbery December 13. A police spokesman said three people, including one armed with a handgun, approached the driver outside a pharmacy in west Baltimore. He said the robbers locked the driver in the back of the truck and drove less than 2 miles to a spot near Interstate 95 in south Baltimore. There, they unloaded 87 crates of narcotics into a private vehicle and drove off, leaving the driver, who called 911 and was found unharmed. Police are working with the Drug Enforcement Administration and the FBI to investigate the case. Investigators believe the robbers likely knew what was in the truck or what was being delivered to the pharmacy. Source: http://www.newsok.com/narcotics-stolen-in-well-planned-robbery/article/feed/226493?custom_click=pod_headline_asia

TRANSPORTATION

Metro to start random bag searches. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) plans to begin random searches of its riders' bags in the coming days, the transit agency said December 16, revisiting a plan first announced 2 years ago. The Metro police chief said the coordinated effort with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) was not in response to a specific threat but was part of a continuing effort to keep the system safe from explosives. Metro officials would not specify when the first searches will begin, how long they will last, which locations will be targeted, or how many riders' bags will be searched. The agency planned to start alerting riders with pamphlets and station announcements December 16. The officers will try to "minimize inconvenience to riders," the WMATA general manager said, with brief inspections of randomly selected riders. Bags will be searched for hazardous materials using ionization technology and explosive-sniffing K-9 units. An earlier proposal involved officers opening riders' bags and looking inside them. But bags will be not be opened unless they are deemed to need further inspection. Furthermore, Metro officials said, the equipment and dogs are looking for explosives and will not be looking for guns or drugs. Source: <http://washingtonexaminer.com/local/dc/2010/12/metro-start-random-bag-searches>

(New York) Abdul Kadir sentenced to life in prison for conspiring to commit terrorist attack at JFK airport. On December 15 in the Eastern District of New York, a United States District Judge sentenced an individual to life in prison for conspiring to attack John F. Kennedy International Airport in Queens, New York, by exploding fuel tanks and the fuel pipeline under the airport. The convict and his co-conspirators believed their attack would cause extensive damage to the airport and to the New York economy, as well as the loss of numerous lives. The case was investigated by the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force in New York. A federal jury convicted the individual and a co-conspirator in July 2010, after a 9-week trial. A third defendant pleaded guilty before trial to supporting the plot and faces a sentence of up to 15 years. A fourth member of the plot faces trial on the same charges as the convicted individuals. Source: <http://newyork.fbi.gov/dojpressrel/pressrel10/nyfo121510a.htm>

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(Virginia; District of Columbia) Pentagon rail station reopens after suspicious package found. An underground commuter rail station at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia was reopened December 15 nearly an hour and a half after police closed it when a suspicious package had been discovered, officials said. The incident, at the height of the morning rush, forced authorities to close the station to passengers while trains continued to travel through the facility. Some 16,000 commuters use the Pentagon station, which is part of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. The U.S. Defense Department's headquarters, located outside Washington D.C. in Arlington, has seen a number of security incidents since it became a target of the September 11 attacks in 2001. Source: <http://www.publicbroadcasting.net/vera/news.newsmain/article/0/0/1737861/US/Pentagon.rail.station.reopens.after.suspicious.package.found>

(District of Columbia) Feds say Va. man threatened Metro system on Facebook. A 26-year-old Virginia man is being held in federal custody after he allegedly threatened to set off bombs on the Washington D.C. transit system. The FBI was alerted to the threats, allegedly sent on Facebook's instant messaging system, by an informant before any plot was developed. The suspect was arrested December 7. According to federal authorities, he described how to build a pipe bomb and said he would place bombs on the third and fifth cars of Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority trains since those trains had the highest number of commuters on them. The nature of the messages the suspect allegedly sent to the FBI's complainant indicates they had a close relationship. The female complainant contacted the FBI's New Orleans office in late November. A special agent with the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force, wrote in an affidavit that the Afghanistan-born suspect said he could put a bomb underneath a sewer head in Georgetown in Washington D.C. during rush hour. Source: http://tpmmuckraker.talkingpointsmemo.com/2010/12/feds_say_va_man_threatened_metro_system_on_facebook.php

U.S. ferries vulnerable to attack, audit found. While some steps have been taken to increase the security of ferries in the United States, the U.S. Coast Guard should review security studies, reassess vehicle screening requirements, and take other actions to improve security, according to a federal watchdog. In its new report, Maritime Security: Ferry Security Measures Have Been Implemented, but Evaluating Existing Studies Could Further Enhance Security, Government Accountability Office (GAO) discusses U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) intelligence findings from April 2010. The public version of the for official use only GAO study said in April 2010, USCG officials reported no credible terrorist threats identified against ferries and their facilities during the previous year. This was true, even though maritime intelligence officials found terrorist groups with the capability of attacking ferries. GAO stated, "in April 2010, Coast Guard officials stated that the relative risk to ferries is increasing, as evidenced by attacks against land-based mass transit and other targets overseas. Federal agencies — including the Coast Guard, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) — ferry operators, and law enforcement entities report that they have taken various actions to enhance the security of ferries and facilities and have implemented related laws, regulations, and guidance." According to 2008 data, U.S. ferries carried more than 82 million passengers and over 25 million vehicles, making ferries potential targets for terrorism in the United States. Ferries have been targets of terrorists overseas, GAO pointed out. DHS concurred with GAO's recommendations. Source: <http://www.hstoday.us/content/view/15727/149/>

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Charlotte teen fell from plane in 'major breach of security,' authorities believe. A Massachusetts prosecutor said it is likely the individual, whose mutilated body was found in a Boston suburb, fell from the sky after stowing away in an airplane wheel well. The Norfolk District Attorney said it appears Charlotte-Douglas Airport in North Carolina had a "major breach of security," and it is unclear what if anything the airport has done to keep it from happening again. The district attorney said police searched the area December 10 in Milton where the 16-year-old male was found last month, and found sneakers and a shirt matching clothing his family said he had worn. He said the items were found along a path a Boston-bound plane would have taken while approaching the city. Authorities believe the individual hid in the airplane, in what the district attorney called a very serious national security issue. The body was found November 15, less than 24 hours after he was last seen in Charlotte. The wheel well theory has consistently been the only thing that explains how he could have gotten to the Boston area so fast, and how his body could have been mutilated so badly. Source: <http://www.wistv.com/Global/story.asp?S=13662693>

WATER AND DAMS

American Southeast, Southwest face similar freshwater scarcity issues. A team of researchers studying freshwater sustainability in the United States have found the Southeast, much like the Southwest, does not have enough water capacity to meet its own needs, according to a December 13 press release. Although the study focused on freshwater sustainability in the Southwest, the researchers from North Carolina State University, University of Georgia (UGA), and University of South Carolina said the findings have important implications for the Southeast too, the release said. For water supply to be considered sustainable, the researchers calculated that no more than 40 percent of freshwater resources can be appropriated for human use, to ensure streamflow variability, navigation, recreation and ecosystem use are accommodated, according to the release. They also determined how much water a region would need to meet all its municipal, agricultural and industrial needs — its virtual water footprint (VWF). The researchers found that neither the Southwest nor the Southeast have enough water capacity to meet all their own needs. "The Southeast has virtually no positive, inland VWFs," said a postdoctoral associate at the UGA Odum School of Ecology. "The largest population centers in southeastern states, with the exception of Florida, are inland. Piedmont cities such as Atlanta, Charlotte and Birmingham rely on small watersheds, which may be why our VWFs are negative." Source: http://watertechnonline.com/news.asp?N_ID=75495

Corps on target to lower Missouri River reservoirs. The Army Corps of Engineers said it expects to complete its drawdown of the Missouri River reservoirs by the end of December. The agency had to boost its releases through the dams this fall because runoff this year was 54 percent above normal. The Corps lowers the lake levels each fall in preparation for spring snowmelt and runoff the following year. Once the reservoirs are at their desired level, the Corps said it will return to normal winter release rates. Source: <http://www.kcautv.com/Global/story.asp?S=13650336>

(Ohio) Piles of road salt polluting public and private wells in Ohio. Environmental regulators said huge piles of road salt used to melt ice on streets and sidewalks are polluting the drinking water in several Ohio towns. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency has found rainwater runoff from salt piles is polluting public and private wells in five Ohio communities. The western Ohio village of Camden had water tainted so strongly by salt the town's residents had to abandon their wells. The

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Preble County health commissioner said the salty water can also corrode plumbing fixtures. One of the problems in controlling the situation is there are no legal limits on how much salt can be in drinking water aside from a federal guideline meant to safeguard taste. Source:

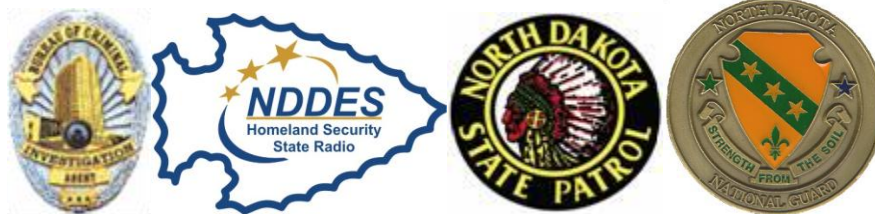
<http://www.examiner.com/environmental-news-in-charleston/piles-of-road-salt-polluting-public-and-private-wells-ohio>

NORTH DAKOTA HOMELAND SECURITY CONTACTS

To report a homeland security incident, please contact your local law enforcement agency or one of these agencies: **Fusion Center (24/7):** 866-885-8295(IN ND ONLY); Email: ndslic@nd.gov ; Fax: 701-328-8175
State Radio: 800-472-2121 **Bureau of Criminal Investigation:** 701-328-5500 **Highway Patrol:** 701-328-2455
US Attorney's Office Intel Analyst: 701-297-7400 **Bismarck FBI:** 701-223-4875 **Fargo FBI:** 701-232-7241

To contribute to this summary or if you have questions or comments, please contact:

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